



## UpGrade Lifestyle, Inc.

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# Business Beat

By Tara E. Smith

Sarah Hart, a competitive swimmer since the age of six, is living her passion. Her company, UpGrade Lifestyle, Inc., began as a college thesis and has turned into a business that changes the lives of her clients. Sarah and her husband Greg have lived in Birkdale for six years and have two daughters, Marissa and Morgan, who, Sarah says “have endless energy!” Like their mother, Marissa, seven, and Morgan, five, love to be active. They love to play soccer, run, bike, and swim in the neighborhood for cross training.

Greg and Sarah met in college in 1989. In the pool at UNC Chapel Hill, Greg and Sarah swam alongside each other every day and became best friends. Sarah’s impressive record as a swimmer is inspiring. To briefly summarize, she is an All-American swimmer, United States National Swim Champion, world-ranked in the 50 and 100 meter freestyle, and represented the United States National Swim Team from 1991-1995. Sarah also gained knowledge of nutrition, physiology, and training techniques from her own training experience at the Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

After moving to Lake Norman in 1998, Sarah worked in the banking industry for five years before deciding to work on her real passion- to “UpGrade” [sic] the lives of members in her community through education, motivation, and empowerment

by creating fitness and nutrition programs to meet their needs. Sarah’s experience of working with clients from the ages of 5-72 allows her and UpGrade Lifestyle to achieve phenomenal results with their clients.

UpGrade Lifestyle is a unique company because they custom design training sessions and programs according to a client’s health and fitness history, current lifestyle obligations, and future goals. In addition, they have a high level of communication with their clients – every three or four days—which aims to empower them to inspire others in the community to change their lives for the better as well. The UpGrade Lifestyle approach is so personal that they even walk clients through the grocery store, clean out their pantry and fridge, and provide specific strategies for dining out as well as on the road. If clients complete their program, they are offered membership to Team UpGrade, a group of healthy, well-balanced and motivated individuals who provide accountability and empowerment to each other.

As one can imagine, Sarah’s hobbies are centered on and around fitness. She loves to run, swim, go to the beach, and watch her children “grow into independent, confident, young women.” When asked to offer advice to her fellow Birkdale neighbors, Sarah has a few tips that she gives her clients to help them get healthier:

### The Elite 8 Helpful Tips:

1. Take a moment to think about and write down your health goals
2. Share your goals with a supportive, positive person
3. Meet with a Motivating Health Professional (UpGrade Lifestyle Coach) to discuss your history, current lifestyle and future goals
4. Get organized
5. Communicate and surround yourself with positive, well-balanced people
6. Stay active and hydrated on a daily basis
7. Remain focused in the midst of adversity – it will happen
8. Visualize yourself achieving your health goals – living a healthy and active lifestyle is achievable

UpGrade Lifestyle is a place that offers certified personal trainers, online training, corporate wellness programs, group health challenges, sport specific programs, and many others. It is a company that actually centers its programs on its mission, “... to educate, motivate and empower ... on how to live a healthy life through custom-designed fitness, nutrition and lifestyle coaching programs”. This mission is exactly what Sarah envisioned years ago when writing her college thesis and what UpGrade Lifestyle strives to deliver to its clients every day.

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